NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

THE

bulletin

Vol. 49/No. 6

April 2006

During Volunteer Week, April 23-29, 2006, we pay tribute to all our teachers for dedicating their time and talents to better the lives of others.

Thank you for answering the call to be teachers. Thank you for the enduring impression you've made in the lives you have touched. Every community needs people like you. Your contributions are immeasurable. Your lessons are permanent. You improve our world. You are so important.

– Donna Fargo
(from A Message of Thanks to All the Great Teachers in This World)

Up Front from the President

Several seats ahead of me and to my left at a gathering in a church in Happy Valley-Goose Bay a few years back sat a distinguished and striking visitor. There appeared to be a dignity about her that compelled me to mention her presence to friends afterwards. I don't exactly know why, but learning that she was a retired teacher pleased me greatly.

I want to believe that this woman had developed a confidence after spending thirty plus years in the classroom that essentially said to the world, without any words being spoken, that she had been provided an opportunity to gain an insight into human nature with which few other people will ever get. That she had been afforded an opportunity to work and learn from both the fragile and the strong, to have worked with the wealthy and the poor, the gifted and the challenged, and the confident and the skeptical and that she had learned from them all. And in so doing, had a message that, even though she is not presently in the classroom, she still wanted to pass on to the society in which she lives. I also wanted to believe that this woman, well groomed and dignified, was still teaching as she stood there.

A healthy society provides the opportunity for its citizens to develop the complete person. A major part of our role as a union of teachers is to, as much as possible, provide an atmosphere that can allow our members to grow and feel satisfied about the job they do and the contributions they make. We know that there are many impediments that can get in the way; however, even with the challenges, we can never relent in our quest to continuously attempt to improve the conditions to allow us all to develop to the degree that we can. The students in our charge are important, but we can never forget that we are important as well.

Even with the incredible demands and expectations that are placed on us and the toll that these sometimes take, we really are provided with opportunities that few members of society ever experience. And from these opportunities there is an insight that can lead to confidence and dignity – qualities that are so essential to healthy living. In my interaction with both the Retired Teachers Association and with retired teachers generally I am impressed with their humour, compassion, empathy and their general overall refinement.

One of the reasons I was so pleased with the recent signing of our Memorandum of Agreement that essentially stabilizes our pension plan for all teachers for generations to come was that the uncertainties that existed leading up to retirement and the uncertainties surrounding retirement are, for the first time in our history, removed. Teachers can now work knowing that the only issue that will impact on those years leading to retirement and on their retirement years themselves will be how we can improve a pension plan that we so rightly deserve.

The confidence and dignity earned over the course of a career will not be clouded as a result of the uncertainties of an inadequate, underfunded pension plan. Active teachers can move into their retirement years with the confidence that they will have the financial stability to allow them to maintain their health and dignity. They can then continue to give back to the society that they helped mold in the first place. We will all be better for it.

the bulletin

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The Bulletin is published eight times a year during the school year by the Nfld. and Labrador Teachers' Assn., 3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada, A1B 1W1.
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Subscription Rate: $16 per year.
For subscriptions and address changes contact Printing Services, Ext. 249.

Deadlines for material are:
May Issue: April 1
June Issue: May 1

ISSN-1189-9662

Member of the Canadian Educational Press Association, International Association of Business Communicators, and the Canadian Association of Communicators in Education.

Printed on Recycled Paper

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Memorandum of Agreement Signed

The Memorandum of Agreement ratified by teachers in the vote of March 7, 2006 was signed on March 9, 2006 by representatives of the NLTA, Provincial Government and the Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards Association. The MOA was ratified by a vote of 87.2% in the provincial bargaining unit and 72.3% in the Labrador West. Negotiations on the remaining items in the opening proposals on the provincial contract were scheduled to continue on March 28-29.

Pictured at signing (l-r): Mr. Edward Hancock, Executive Director, NLTA; Mr. Kevin Foley, President, NLTA; the Honourable Loyola Sullivan, Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board; and Mr. Brian Shortall, Executive Director, Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards Association

NLTA Scholarships

To obtain an application form visit the NLTA website at **www.nlta.nl.ca** and click on **"Forms Online"** or contact the NLTA Professional Development Division, Tel: 726-3223 or Toll Free: 1-800-563-3599.

Application Deadline: July 31, 2006

PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

NEWS

POINT LEAMINGTON

Family Literacy Day a huge success

Principal Woolridge sings to students during Family Literacy Day at Point Leamington Academy.

With emphasis on Family Literacy Day at Point Leamington Academy's School/Public Library, there were a number of activities taking place during the week of January 23-27. Principal Darren Woolridge accepted the challenge from the primary/elementary students to sing to them if they reached their goal of reading 500 books in just one week. The students exceeded this goal and Mr. Woolridge provided very humorous and enjoyable renditions of Soggy Bottom Boys', *Man of Constant Sorrow* and Hank Williams', *Hey Good Lookin'*. Co-operation between the school and the library is proving to be very beneficial in providing improved library services. Numerous pictures of the students involved in reading were displayed on the "Wall of Fame". As well, to encourage reading, singing and family involvement, the school held a karaoke night at the library. Everyone had a great time! Students were given an opportunity to win prizes by participating in various other fun activities throughout the week including coloring pages, puzzles and crosswords.

NAIN

Janeway Fund Raising Days at Jens Haven Primary

The students of Jens Haven Primary in Nain, Labrador, have been involved in fund raising for the Janeway Children's Hospital since the mid 1990s. Students raised $480 in 2004 and $400 in 2005 with some support from Jens Haven Memorial, the grades 4-12 school. This year the school more than doubled their previous fund raising attempts.

Parents and teachers made treats that the children could buy during the school's Valentine's Day Bake Sales. Each day during the Valentine Day week, children paid a quarter to participate in various special days such as Teddy Bear Day, Dress Up Day, Hat Day, Crazy Hair Day, Pajama Day, and Valentine Day Colour Day. The most prosperous event was a challenge to see which class could raise the most money. The Kindergarten and Grade 2 classes raised $127 and $135 respectively and were awarded a movie/hot dog party one afternoon. A Valentine's Day Assembly was held on February 14 where some games were played and the winners of the guessing games were announced.

Students at Jens Haven Primary raise $1,000 for Janeway Day in the Schools.

Over the span of three weeks, a final total of $1,000 was raised, including a donation of $100 from Nain's Recreation Department. "This fund raising initiative has shown the students how important it is to donate to the Janeway," said Wendy Marsh, a Primary Reading Specialist at Jens Haven Primary. "We hope to challenge the students of the grades 4-12 school next year in an attempt to better this year's current total. Congratulations to the students of Jens Haven Primary on a job well done!"

HOLYROOD

School celebrates first annual winter carnival

Holy Cross Elementary in Holyrood celebrated their first annual Winter Carnival during the week of February 13 to 17. It was a busy and fun-filled week for all students and staff.

The carnival began on Monday morning with the Opening Ceremonies and parade of students, followed

by an afternoon of outdoor sports and activities. Of course there was hot chocolate served by members of the School Council. Tuesday was a skating party at Mile One Stadium. Wednesday featured more fun outdoor activities and the "teachers vs. students" floor hockey game (the students won 6-5!). On Thursday, the school held relay races in the gym, family tug of war and Food Fear Factor. Students had to eat artichoke, bean salad, carrot sticks, bran, and tomato juice! Friday was Holy Cross Idol. Many students auditioned and the final ten students competed for some great prizes, donated by Wal-Mart in Clarenville.

Students in Ms. Hickey's Grade 2 class at Holy Cross Elementary build 100 cup structures to celebrate 100 days at school.

"It was a week to remember at Holy Cross," said Jamie Coady, Assistant Principal at Holy Cross Elementary. "The entire staff was involved in the planning, gave up many recess and lunch periods and stayed after school to supervise activities. For students it was a week of fun and friendship. We cannot wait until next year!"

Volunteers sought for Dr. Lynda Younghusband study

Lynda Younghusband, PhD., is continuing her research on teacher stress. She is interested in interviewing teachers who have experienced acts of violence (incidents of abuse, threats, insults or humiliation, directed toward and intended to hurt teachers physically, emotionally, psychologically or socially). **All contacts will be strictly confidential.**

If you are interested in participating please contact Dr. Lynda Younghusband, Tel: 726-8145 (h); 737-3501 (w); e-mail ybnb@nfld.net.

BAY D'ESPOIR

Students become Hydrowise Special Agents

Kids say the darndest things, and parents most often listen. Imagine your 8-year-old following you around the house turning off the lights in every room, or knocking on the bathroom door to let you know your time in the shower is officially up. Well, if your child is a Hydrowise Special Agent, that's exactly what might be happening in your home.

The HYDROWISE Energy Management Program is a multi-year education and awareness initiative aimed at promoting interest in energy conservation, and assisting residents of this province to manage their energy costs. As part of this program, Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro has developed the HYDROWISE Energy Conservation School Pilot Program. This school pilot program was created to educate students on the importance of energy conservation, to illustrate that their actions can make a difference in assuring the quality of our environment, and to increase the adoption of energy efficient behaviours at home, in school, and within communities.

Grade 2 and 3 students at Bay d'Espoir Academy receive their Agents in Training Badges.

The six-week pilot program was completed in December at Bay d'Espoir Academy, when the Grade 2 and 3 classes were officially sworn in as "Special Agents" of the HYDROWISE Energy Conservation School Program. The pilot program incorporates a special agent theme, with students being agents in training until they complete all the missions necessary to become a HYDROWISE special agent. Dave Collier, Plant Security and Safety Supervisor at the Bay d'Espoir Generating Plant, visited the school to brief students on their special energy conservation missions and presented them with official Agent in Training badges, which were replaced with Special Agent badges upon completion of their missions.

The program has been developed with assistance from the teachers of Bay d'Espoir Academy, as well as Principal Shawn Fowlow. Victoria Arbuckle, Grade 2 teacher, and Marie Ingram, Grade 3 teacher, Student Interns, Dawn Strickland and Genista Perry, also worked with Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro to review materials and offer suggestions about the learning resources. "By implementing the program at the Grade 2 and 3 level we hope that it will instill in students an awareness of the importance of conservation at an early age," said Principal Fowlow, "and that it will become a natural part of their thinking."

As part of the program, two cartoon characters, HYDROWISE special agents Emily Power and Kyle Watts, were developed to reinforce the special agent theme and teach children about energy conservation. The program had four modules, each with a number of learning activities, and several teaching items, including teaching boards, activity sheets, and workbooks were produced for the program. The four modules the students completed were: Introduction of Program and Household Appliances, Lights, Hot Water, Drafts and Conclusion of Program.

Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro's plan now is to extend the program to more of the province's schools in the near future.

ST. JOHN'S

The Olympic experience

On Monday, February 10, 2006, St. Andrew's Elementary School in St. John's held its opening ceremonies to begin a two-week Olympic Games experience. On hand for the special event were the Honorable Danny Williams, Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, Mr. Kevin Foley, President of Newfoundland Labrador Teachers' Association and Mr. Paul House, Program Specialist with the Eastern School District.

l-r: Mr. Winston Taylor (Phys. Ed./Gr. 5 teacher), Mr. Paul House (Program Specialist, Eastern School District), NLTA President Kevin Foley, Mr. Gerald Mercer (Principal), and Premier Danny Williams.

"The opening ceremony provided an opportunity for students, staff and members of the St. Andrew's Elementary school community to begin the Olympic experience at the same time as the 20th Olympic Games were being showcased in Torino, Italy," said Winston Taylor, Physical Education/Grade 5 teacher at St. Andrew's Elementary. The format of the ceremony was similar to that which was unfolding in Torino. Together, the parade of countries, the reading of the Olympic Oath, and the highlight, the torch lighting, made for a very enjoyable experience.

Mr. Taylor said the message provided by Premier Williams about fair play, the spirit to compete and the opportunity to be "the best that you can be" was a very poignant moment during the ceremony. "We cannot forget his prediction that Team Gushue would bring back gold from Torino. That prediction received the loudest reaction during the opening ceremony. Those words and the greetings provided by Mr. Kevin Foley and Mr. Paul House to our school community set the tone for our celebration."

Throughout the two-week Olympic adventure the school community planned many special events and learning experiences. Each grade displayed a bulletin board to help showcase their chosen Olympic country and Olympic sport. An ongoing tote board was displayed in the main lobby of the building to provide students and visiting community members an up-to-date record of the actual medal counts. An academic Olympics day was planned and carried out with great success. Cross-country skiing and modified Olympic sports were taught during physical education classes. All academic subjects were integrated into the Olympic games lessons. "The combination of sport and academics worked!" said Mr. Taylor. "Students were able to maintain their academics while they experienced the Olympic tradition."

On Friday, February 24, St. Andrew's Elementary closed the Olympic. As was witnessed in the opening ceremony, students, staff and community members were treated to a very rewarding time. After the official extinguishing of the Olympic flame and the announcement to officially close the games, the students took center stage and shared their talents in a variety show. "This was a fitting way to bring closure to such a fun and educational project," said Mr. Taylor.

The best, however, was to come. A fitting end to the two-week adventure occurred when, on Friday afternoon, the Honourable Danny Williams' prediction came true. Team Gushue won the gold and that win provided our province an opportunity to celebrate the Olympic spirit just as St. Andrew's Elementary did from February 10-24, 2006.

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

2006 Christmas card contest winners announced

Lydia Halley, a Grade 4 student at Macdonald Drive Elementary School in St. John's, has been chosen as winner of the 2006 NLTA Christmas Card Contest. Lydia receives a $100 cash award and a framed copy of her winning entry. Her winning design will appear on the NLTA Christmas card that will be sent to schools, businesses and other groups in December 2006. The theme for the 2006 contest was *Christmas Is...*, and this year the contest was open to all Grade 4 students in the province.

Lydia Halley's winning design for the 2006 NLTA Christmas Card.

The second place cash prize of $50 was awarded to Kirby Williams, a Grade 4 student at Goulds Elementary, and a third place cash prize of $25 was awarded to Grade 4 student Cassandra Ings of Lewisporte Academy.

The Communications/Political Action Committee of the NLTA chooses the theme each year and entries are judged on the basis of their relevance to the theme, creativity, colour and ability to reproduce well.

GMPP Information Sessions 2006

By the time we retire many of us will have worked for more than 30 years. As we get closer to retirement, most workers start to realize that one of the most important benefits negotiated for members of the Association is a pension plan.

Pensions are negotiated so members can retire with dignity. A pension can provide you with the ability to enjoy life and, in many cases, do the things you didn't have time to do while you were working and raising a family.

(continued on page 8)

It is critical that members realize their decisions regarding how their money is invested play a significant role in determining the amount of their pension. Usually the earlier these decisions are made, the better off the member will be in retirement.

Every year information sessions are held throughout the province. By attending these sessions, you can learn more about the pension plan and the investment options available to you as a plan member. Wise investment decisions today could enhance your pension upon retirement. We encourage all plan members to attend these sessions. Information on the locations, dates and times will be provided to you in your quarterly GMPP Benefit Statement.

One quote heard regularly from plan members who had attended past sessions: "I wish I had known years ago what I have learned here today about my investment options."

This year take the time to attend one of these information sessions. You are welcome to bring your partner/companion. It's never too early or too late to start making good decisions about your pension and your money. For further information contact Mike Rickert, Pensions Division, Tel: 709-729-3931/3932.

CANADA

Everyone counts in the 2006 Census!

On Tuesday, May 16, more than 32.5 million people in Canada will "count themselves in" when they complete and return their 2006 Census questionnaire either online at www.census2006.ca or by mail.

So why take a census? Because governments of all levels use census data to make policy decisions about Canada's economic and social programs. In fact, census data are used by numerous federal-provincial programs including transfer payments, Old Age Security, official languages and Veterans' Pensions and War Veterans' Allowance.

Business, industry, associations, institutions, academia and the media depend on census data as a valuable decision-making tool. Census data are also used to plan important community services such as: health care; education; transportation; day care; fire and police protection; employment and training programs; and subsidized housing.

Statistics Canada is bound by law to protect the confidentiality and identity of individuals in all data. Data are screened to ensure anonymity; data are randomly rounded to the nearest multiple of five or ten; and no details are released for areas with populations below a certain size.

All employees who work with census forms are sworn to secrecy. The Statistics Act contains penalties in the form of a fine of up to $1,000 or a jail term of six months, or both, if an employee releases personal census information. Also, only employees who need to use completed census forms for their work will see individual forms.

Census taking is recognized worldwide for its important contribution in planning for the future. The majority of countries take a census on a regular basis. In Canada, the census tradition goes back more than 300 years to when Intendant Jean Talon conducted the first census of the colony of New France.

On May 16, take part in a new Canadian tradition and "count yourself in!" online at www.census2006.ca.

ORVILLE COOPER, 1944 – 2005

Orville Cooper passed away peacefully on October 8, 2005. Though his death was sudden and unexpected, he had courageously battled cancer for nine years. Orville was born on March 2, 1944. He started his teaching career at the age of 17 in a one-room school in Morley's Siding. He taught there for three years and one year in his home town of Green's Harbour before pursuing other job opportunities. After an eight-year absence from teaching he could hear the classroom calling. In 1973, after attending Memorial University, he taught one year at Point Leamington. The following year he obtained a job at Woodland Elementary, Dildo, where he taught until his retirement in 1999.

As a seasoned teacher, he was open to new ideas and loved a challenge. He drew on his tremendous sense of humor to deal with the many social, emotional and academic situations that life tossed his way. As a colleague, he was well liked. He was easy going, approachable and loved fun. Orville had a passion for teaching which was so evident in his relationship with his colleagues, parents and students. As a dedicated teacher, he always expected the most from his students and they respected him for this. A colleague of Orville used this quote because she felt it spoke so clearly of him. "Happiness comes from the capacity to feel deeply, enjoy life simply, to think freely, to risk life and be needed."

Orville was a "jack of all trades" to many on his staff. This came naturally for him out of his deep sense of love and compassion for life. If teaching was his passion, trouting was not far behind. As one of his fishing buddies remarked, they had combined to put the mud trout on the endangered species list. Yes, Orville was once described as being able to catch fish from a pothole. He spent many hours by the side of his favourite pond.

Orville spent many years as a member and president of the Lions Club and 25 years as Chairperson of the Green's Harbour Local Service Committee, a position he resigned from just two months before his death. He devoted endless hours and support to the community as a citizen. His integrity and commitment to his work was admirable.

Orville had a deep compassion for his family, his wife Velma of 35 years, his son Jody, daughter Heidi and daughter-in-law Nancy. His smiles, jokes and chuckles will certainly be missed by us all. But he will always be remembered as a dedicated teacher, friend, husband and father. We know that if he is not helping someone where he is now, he's probably fishing quietly beside some stream in peace. We thank God for Orville's presence in our lives over the past years.
(Submitted by Velma, Jody and Heidi.)

MICHAEL J. MCCARTHY, 1932 – 2005

Michael McCarthy passed into his eternal rest on October 28, 2005. Mike was born in St. Jacques, Fortune Bay and moved to Terrenceville when he was five years old where he completed his Grade 11. He attended Memorial University of Newfoundland and the University of Ottawa where he obtained an M.A. in Literature. He began a long and distinguished career in education as a teacher, principal, Superintendent of Education, Director of Public Examinations for Newfoundland and Labrador, and retired in 1986 as a Language Arts Coordinator.

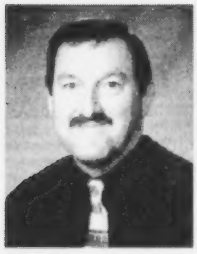
Mike was a very compassionate and concerned person and made a significant contribution to the development of education in the province. His educational career took him to such places as Cape St. George, Fogo, Southern Shore and St. John's. Mike met and married Anna Hamlyn, a fellow teacher, while they both were teaching in St. John's. During their long and happy marriage they had two children: Michael and Karen. Anna described Mike as a wonderful husband and father and added: "I will miss him terribly." His son Michael summed it up aptly for himself and his sister Karen: "He was a great man and a great dad. He was truly generous with his time and talent. I couldn't have asked for a better father."

Mike was a distinguished writer having authored and co-authored numerous books along with writing for several magazines as well as radio and television. Mike wrote a column for many years reviewing Newfoundland and Labrador books in the Sunday Edition of *The Telegram*. The editor, Brian Jones, stated that Mike's monthly column was a valued contribution to the paper. "We could rely on him to consistently provide interesting and insightful reviews of any book he wrote about, especially non-fiction volumes. We, and his many readers, will miss him."

A Eucharistic celebration took place for Mike on November 1, 2005 at St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church in Mount Pearl. He was laid to rest in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery. His wife Anna, son Michael, daughter Karen, sister Alice Lannon and numerous relatives and friends will sadly miss him.
(Submitted by Frank Galgay.)

Orville Cooper

Michael J. McCarthy



John Croke

JOHN CROKE, 1951 – 2005

It is with fond and loving memories that John will always hold a special place in our hearts. The son of a mariner, Thomas Croke, and Rita (nee Mackey), John grew up on St. Brendan's, a small and now the only inhabited island in Bonavista Bay. It was from his family that John developed the ideals and values which would shape his character for the rest of his life.

His education began in 1957 in the dining room of an old parish hall. Conditions were not exactly ideal, but that would never become a deterrent to setting goals and aspirations for the future. John completed his high school education in 1968 at St. Gabriel's School. He attended Memorial University that year and obtained a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Education in 1972 and commenced his teaching career at Stella Maris in Trepassey, where he taught for four years. He then obtained a teaching position at St. Gabriel's, and it was here he completed his career both as teacher and administrator and retired in 2003 after 30 years. In the interim, John also obtained a Masters degree in Administration.

John was a tireless worker and a diligent teacher who emulated all the necessary qualities needed to develop his students and help them grow to become young men and women. He demanded respect and gave respect in return to every student in his classroom.

I knew John all my life as a friend, schoolmate, university buddy and colleague at St. Gabriel's. I suppose if I were to describe him to anyone, I probably would say that he was a person with an "I" syndrome. I don't mean that in an egotistical sense, but as a mere character reference. He was an *Incredible*, person, with an *Impeccable* ability to teach, who always tried to leave an *Impression* on his students; while at the same time taught them the virtues of *Involvement* so that they would understand there was always room for *Improvement*. This fact was not only evident in his school, but also in his community and in his church. The hours spent working as a volunteer were endless. Associations, committees, councils and clubs, especially the St. Brendan's Lions Club, will never be able to express enough thanks to John for the hours spent working for his community. He left a lasting impression on everyone who had the privilege to work or socialize with him.

On November 19, 2005, John left us suddenly and changed our lives immensely. He will be forever missed as a friend, colleague and member of our community. I would like to extend sincere condolences to his best friend and wife, Joan (Walsh), his children, Renee, Rita, and Jillian, and his family and friends. The care, concern and kindness which were so much a part of John's life will, I'm sure, leave a void in their hearts and a longing for his presence again. I honestly hope that they will be consoled by the fact that John lived for others, and tried incessantly to make their lives a little better by his determination, consideration and compassion.

(Submitted by Greg O'Rielly, friend and colleague, on behalf of the family.)

Joan-Paul Gignac

JEAN-PAUL GIGNAC, 1971 – 2005

Jean-Paul Gignac grew up with his family in Lewisporte. Following in the steps of his father, Mr. Robert Gignac, he entered the profession of education and, while only in the field for seven years, made a significant impact on the lives of those students, teachers and administrative peers with whom he worked.

After a brief year teaching up north, Jean-Paul and his wife Trina spent one year in Grey River where he was principal of All Saints All-Grade School. During the 2000-01 year the couple had their first of two girls, Aimee, and moved to Stephenville the following year. Jean-Paul took the administrative position at St. Thomas Aquinas in 2001 and continued in that role until his untimely passing in July 2005. During those years the couple's second daughter, Isabelle, was born and, along with his son Gregory, completed the Gignac nest.

While his time as principal was short, Jean-Paul's effect upon the learning environment of his school, his district, and his province was strongly felt. Jean-Paul was a very optimistic, student-centered teaching administrator and offered sincerity, heart-felt compassion and direction for the students he worked with in both schools within the prior Cormack Trail School Board. He was a confidante for staff and often a breath of fresh air, emanating humor and humanity with every exchange between himself and his co-workers.

He was also involved in a number of committees within the district and helped offer quality input in the areas of the Leadership at Work program in its initial stages in the area, as well as in the directions the school board was to take in its Strategic Education Plan, specifically in the area of professional development.

Finally, Jean-Paul became president of the regional School Administrator's Council and, as a representative from the west coast, helped facilitate a number of initiatives to foster professional development for school administrators, both locally and provincially. His best work came in the form of the organization of the first provincial School Administrator's Council conference to be held on the west coast since 1999. Jean-Paul was unable to attend the actual conference due to medical treatments for the cancer he was fighting, but spoke to

the planning committee members each day and evening to find out how things were going and to pass on greetings to old friends and colleagues.

On Monday, July 18, 2005, Jean-Paul Gignac passed away, but his contributions to the quality of the learning environment will not be forgotten in Port au Port or throughout his home province. His time was short but well lived; his regard for his fellow man was well known; his love for his wife, children, parents and sisters is still in existence; and the opportunity to spend time with him was your honour.
(Submitted by friend and colleague Terry LaVallee.)

ROSEANN ARNOLD

As the first anniversary of Roseann Arnold's passing approaches, we who loved, respected and cherished her look back, still in disbelief. Roseann had a full life, however, much too short.

After graduating from Memorial University with a Bachelor of Primary Education, Roseann started teaching in 1968 at the age of 18. Her career began at St. Patrick's Hall Primary School on Merrymeeting Road in St. John's. Her dedication to, and interest in her students had no limits. Even children who were not in her class wanted to be.

In 1988 Roseann moved to Presentation Primary, then back to St. Pat's in 1996, and finally to Macpherson Elementary where she retired in June 2000, having served the children of St. John's for 32 years.

During these many moves, which were always the result of reorganization, Roseann showed herself to be a team player. Whether it was loading up her truck to help a fellow teacher move or bringing in those fabulous homemade rolls for recess, Roseann was always there.

In 1998 St. Pat's experienced a fire and the teachers and students were temporarily relocated. Roseann approached this challenge as she did all others – there is a job to be done…let's do it! She seldom called attention to herself, and we all benefitted from her quiet leadership. She went about the business of educating the primary children entrusted to her care with both dignity and dedication.

Roseann was a person who did not "suffer fools gladly" – except her husband! She was quite capable of speaking her mind and expressing her opinion. Her concern was always for the children and how their best interests would be served.

Accepting and using new teaching techniques and implementing new programs is a constant in the lives of teachers. Roseann had that rare ability to combine the best from the existing programs, while fully embracing the philosophy and practises of the new ones. No need to "throw out the baby with the bath water" she would say.

Christmas was always special in Mrs. Arnold's classroom. One of the things Roseann did every year was to fill stockings for her students. Her own mother would knit the stockings and Roseann would hang them on the classroom Christmas tree. This became a tradition for her classes. Many times when Roseann met former students, they would mention the stocking… "I still hang it up every year, Miss."

As a teacher, Roseann had a way of getting to know each one of her students. She was never quick to judge and remained open-minded, even with the most trying child. She was demanding of her students and expected them to be their best, yet she never failed to praise progress, or even good effort. The children in her class knew they would be treated fairly and they loved her for it.

Roseann led such a healthy lifestyle, that when cancer struck her we believed that she would beat it. She had seldom been sick and it didn't seem possible that her life would be cut short. She treated her cancer as she had all others challenges in her life – she faced it with grace and faith. Through the support of her loved ones and her own inner strength, she fought cancer for nearly 12 months. Her husband Jeff, their daughter Robynn, her family, friends and colleagues were devastated when, on April 20, 2005 Roseann passed away as she had lived – with quiet dignity.

Roseann does not need to be "enlarged in death beyond what she was in life." She will be remembered as a hard-working, dedicated and talented teacher; a devoted, loving and loyal wife; and a patient, caring and supportive mom.

It was a true pleasure to teach with Roseann and a privilege to be her friend. They broke the mold! Always remembered, never forgotten.
(Submitted by friends and colleagues of Presentation Primary School.)

Roseann Arnold

CORRECTION

ANNA C. MATCHIM, 1946 – 2005

The obituary for Anna C. Matchim in the January/February issue the *The Bulletin*, stated that Anna Matchim had taught at Cowan Heights Elementary in St. John's. This should have stated that she had taught at Macdonald Drive Elementary in St. John's, ***not*** Cowan Heights Elementary.

Anna Matchim

Education Week 2006 Opening Ceremonies

A Time to Celebrate and Participate

Elvis is alive and well at Christ the King School.

The Education Week 2006 Opening Ceremonies, which took place on Monday, March 7 at Christ the King School in Rushoon, were a very fitting example of this year's theme, *Celebrate and Participate*. Students and teachers at Christ the King School, as well as schools in the Rushoon-Terrenceville Branch, treated parents and invited guests to a celebration of the wonderful array of talent that exists within our schools.

The planning for the event began many weeks earlier and principal Leo Hynes was thrilled when he was asked to host the event at Christ the King School. A volunteer committee comprised of teachers and parents, and headed up by Elizabeth Murphy, a teacher at Christ the King School and former NLTA Provincial Executive member, worked extremely hard to put together an outstanding program of entertainment for the event. Other members of the planning committee were: Cathy Whiffen, Marion Barnes, Shelly Pike, George Sheppard, Leo Hynes, Larry Ryan, Doreen Hayse, Dolorosa Murphy and Jackie Maloney.

The ceremonies featured performances by the primary and elementary students from Christ the King School, as well as many other musical performances by schools of the Rushoon-Terrenceville Branch: Fortune Bay Academy (St. Bernard's-Jacques Fontaine); St. Anne's School, (South East Bight); Sts. J. Fisher and T. More (Petite Forte); St. Joseph's All Grade (Terrenceville); St. George's School (English Harbour East); and St. Thomas School (Grand Le Pierre). Students and community members from the 50+ Club also came together in the spirit of the day to perform a traditional dance. The Grade 8 boys from Christ the King School delighted the audience with an entertaining recitation titled *The Fellow That Looked Like Me*, with some wonderful toe-tapping accordion music by student Trevor Miller. Christ the King Student Council President, Joshua Picco, one of a number of student emcees at the ceremonies, along with student Susan Synard, performed a beautiful rendition of John Lennon's *Imagine*, accompanied on the piano by student Victoria Barry. The audience also discovered the technological expertise of students when they viewed an e-book presentation which was written and illustrated by Grade 9 student Sarah Whiffen and read by Grade 2 student Brianna Cox. Another highlight of the ceremonies was a performance of *My Teacher Thinks He's Elvis* by the primary/elementary students of Christ the King School, complete with Elvis impersonator, teacher George Sheppard.

Primary/elementary students from Christ the King School entertain audience members during the Education Week 2006 Opening Ceremonies.

Guests at the Opening Ceremonies included: Kevin Foley, President of the NLTA; Mr. Clyde Jackman, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Education; Dr. Darin King, Director and CEO of the Eastern School District; Ms. Sharon Barry, Chair, Christ the King School Council; Ms. Trudy Upshall, President, Rushoon-Terrenceville Branch; and numerous other invited guests including members of the Eastern School District and community leaders from the Placentia West area.

Mr. Clyde Jackman, Dr. Darin King, Principal Leo Hynes, and NLTA President Kevin Foley addressed the audience. "Education Week is a fabulous opportunity to acknowledge the wonderful things happening in our schools," said Mr. Foley. "... the emphasis for Education

Week has been placed on encouraging parents, community members, and the public to become involved in education, along with teachers and students. This is certainly evident here today," he continued.

Well-known Newfoundland and Labrador author, Kevin Major, Honourary Chairperson for Education Week 2006, was regrettably unable to attend the ceremonies due to poor weather conditions. Mr. Edward Hancock, Executive Director of the NLTA read a statement on his behalf. "No part of the world has ever risen to greatness without education. And no government can do anything more worthwhile for its people than to channel money into education. For it is education that gives people the tools they need to direct their futures. ... So let's celebrate the benefits of education, but let us also make sure we participate, by making it a part of who we are, now and throughout our lives. And let's make sure our political friends give it the attention it must have if all of Newfoundland and Labrador is to thrive."

Mr. Clyde Jackman (left) and NLTA President Kevin Foley sign the Education Week 2006 proclamation.

Other highlights of the Opening Ceremonies included the signing of the Education Week proclamation by Mr. Clyde Jackman and Mr. Kevin Foley, read in English by student Erin Barry, and in French by student Jillian Matterface. The cutting of the Education Week cake was carried out by students Lexie Norman and Stephanie Whyte.

Students Lexie Norman and Stephanie Whyte cut the Education Week cake.

Immediately following the Opening Ceremonies a social was held for invited guests and students from the visiting schools. The school community went above and beyond by putting together an outstanding selection of traditional Newfoundland and Labrador foods which were thoroughly enjoyed by all.

The excitement and enthusiasm had been evident for days as the students, teachers, and the entire school community worked extremely hard to make this event such a success. For the many invited guests, students, teachers and parents, the 2006 Education Week Opening Ceremonies were truly a time to celebrate and participate.

With the help and cooperation of the Centre for Distance, Learning and Innovation (CDLI), this year's Opening Ceremonies can be viewed online on the NLTA website at www.nlta.nl.ca. Click on the "Education Week" link.

The NLTA has been sponsoring Education Week in Newfoundland and Labrador for 70 years, since 1936.

Christ the King students Joshua Pike and Susan Synard perform a John Lennon classic.

Collective Agreement Dates to Remember

The Important Process of Redundancy, Reassignment & Layoff

by PERRY DOWNEY

As we approach the end of March, teachers who are planning to retire at the end of the current school year are reminded that, in accordance with Clause 12.02(b) of the Provincial Collective Agreement (Clause 48.029(b) of the Labrador West Collective Agreement), "*a teacher shall give three (3) month's notice in writing to the School Board prior to superannuation at the end of the school year.*" Thus, March 31 is considered to be the resignation deadline for retiring teachers. Any teacher who is not retiring, but who has decided to terminate his/her contract of employment, is reminded that in accordance with Clause 12.02(a) of the Provincial Collective Agreement (Clause 48.02(a) of the Labrador West Collective Agreement), they are required to provide two (2) month's notice, in writing, if the contract is to be terminated at the end of the school year. Thus, April 30 is considered to be the last day to resign for those wishing to leave the employ of their Board.

In accordance with Clause 9.07 of the Provincial Collective Agreement (Clause 47.08 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement), the last day for teachers to be notified of layoff is May 7. Teachers are thus reminded to review Article 9: Layoff in the Provincial Collective Agreement (Article 47 in the Labrador West Collective Agreement). Outlined here is the process that each school district is required to follow as they prepare and finalize their staffing plans for the 2006-07 school year if teaching positions are to be eliminated.

Because this process can have significant implications to individual teachers, it is very important that all teachers become familiar with the redundancy/reassignment and layoff process and with their rights as provided in either the Provincial Collective Agreement or the Labrador West Collective Agreement. To briefly review the process that should occur when a position(s) is/are lost, i.e., a position(s) is/are redundant, all teachers should be familiar with the following:

Step I – Clause 9.01 (1.01 (h) – Labrador West): Teachers must ensure that their placement on the School Board's seniority list accurately reflects their entire teaching service in the Kindergarten to Level III public school system in the province, i.e., every day should be recorded as seniority. Time taught outside the province or outside of the Kindergarten to Level III school system cannot be credited as seniority. If there are discrepancies between your calculation of seniority and the School Board records, it is the teacher's responsibility to notify their School Board official as soon as it is discovered.

Step II – Clause 9.02 (47.02 – Labrador West): Senior teachers shall be reassigned to the remaining positions within the school that they are capable of filling. Subject to capability, the reassignment process shall be as follows: tenured teachers; teachers on a one-year probationary contract; teachers on a two-year probationary contract; teachers on probationary contracts in accordance with Clause 7.05.

Step III – Clause 9.03 (47.03 – Labrador West): A teacher who is not reassigned in accordance with Clause 9.02 (47.02 - Labrador West), shall have priority, based upon seniority, subject to capability, to vacant teaching positions or positions held by junior teachers, in the following order of priority: within the community; the nearest community, within the school district, where such a position exists.

Note: With respect to Clauses 9.02 and 9.03 (47.02 and 47.03 – Labrador West), in determining capability to fulfill the requirements of the job function, the School Board shall consider the overall ability of the teacher to perform the functions of the position in accordance with the currently modern standards required for the position.

Step IV: Any teacher who is declared redundant and not reassigned, in accordance with Clauses 9.02 and/or 9.03 (47.02 and 47.03 – Labrador West), is deemed to have been "laid off" and thus placed on recall. Any teacher placed on recall has rights to vacant comparable positions during the subsequent

three (3) years following the layoff (Clause 9.10) (47.11 – Labrador West).

To paraphrase Clause 9.07(b) (47.06 – Labrador West), a teacher who is reassigned and notified in writing in accordance with Article 9 (Article 47 — Labrador West), has ten (10) calendar days to notify the School Board of his/her acceptance or rejection of the reassignment. Also, as stated in Clause 9.09 (47.05 – Labrador West): *A School Board will not advertise any positions or hire any teachers until it has made every effort to place those teachers who have been laid off or who have been notified in writing that they are to be laid off.*

Any teacher who is notified by his/her school administrator and/or school district office personnel that their position is to become redundant and that they will be reassigned or laid off for the following school year should consult with the designated Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division responsible for that district. The school district designations for each Administrative Officer are as follows:

District 1	**Labrador**	Perry Downey	ext. 226
District 2	**Western**	Perry Downey	ext. 226
District 3	**Nova Central**	Stefanie Tuff	ext. 232
District 4	**Eastern:**		
	Teachers under the Marystown Regional Office	Lloyd Hobbs	ext. 230
	Teachers under the Spaniard's Bay Office	Lloyd Hobbs	ext. 230
	Teachers under the St. John's Central Office	Don Ash	ext. 231
	Teachers Under the Clarenville Regional Office	Don Ash	ext. 231
District 5	**Conseil Scolaire Francophone Provincial de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador**	Stefanie Tuff	ext. 232
Dept. of Education Schools	**Newfoundland School for the Deaf Newfoundland & Labrador Youth Centre**	Don Ash	ext. 231

Perry Downey is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA.

It's the "Principal" of the thing ...

by CLAUDETTE E. S. COOMBS

The school environment is a major factor in determining not only student success, but also the satisfaction of staff spending their days there.

There are many factors which influence the climate of the school, but possibly the most critical is the role of the principal. The principal's expectations, behaviours and interactions will establish a climate which the staff model and in which all facets of the school function. When trying to influence school improvement, the principal can reflect on many areas of his/her organizational performance and style of interpersonal interactions.

Effective Leadership begins with leading by example for the skills and attitudes desired in the school. Know your own strengths and weaknesses! It may be impossible to master all, but you can surround yourself with a team, who together has the strengths needed for the smooth operation of the school facility and community. Establishing a team of committed and competent colleagues is essential to creating an efficiently run school which achieves its goals.

Important Skills encompass areas such as interpersonal relationships, time and resource management, handling crises, goal and priority setting, clear communications strategies, knowledge development and transmission, task delegation and team or collaborative efforts. Although a staff may share a common set of educational values and believe in the overall goal for the school, the principal's positive, supportive attitude is a key trait to get the best work from the staff. This doesn't mean that you have to possess all skills, but it is necessary to value them and share the management of the school's objectives with teachers who possess the appropriate skills. For example, one way to increase teacher stress and colleague resentment and to decrease school productivity is to place a technically challenged teacher in charge of website design and maintenance! Although this step could be unintentional, it reflects an inefficient use of time and a lack of consideration for the talents and limitations of individuals.

The Power Imbalance between administrators and teachers can create an environment which presents unnecessary tension or anxiety. This can be the case especially for untenured, replacement or short-term contract teachers. The administrator fills a role of authority over the teacher. The principal acts as the intermediary between the employer and the teacher, often between the parent and the teacher, and at times, between the student and the teacher. The principal provides a job recommendation, performance evaluation or personal reference. The principal has the power to select a teacher's duties, course load, representation on committees or classroom location. In this relationship, teachers want to ensure that they present as competent, positive, team-working professionals who share the common vision and goals for the work environment. This is a high standard to consistently maintain and may invite some pressures of its own! Therefore, to function optimally in this environment, the teacher needs to trust the fairness and competence of the principal and feel respected and valued. Given our current workload and interpersonal stressors in the workplace, this can be a daily challenge for everyone. Behaviours can be abrupt or misinterpreted, fatigue can interfere with tolerance or forgiveness and there may not be enough compassion to go around!

A Mutually Satisfying Environment doesn't happen by accident. It requires the deliberate action of all workers. To set the stage for success, it is important for each person to start from the same premise. First, each person must believe in a common vision of the school. Once that is established, all must settle on an acceptable way to make that vision a reality. It is unlikely that each action of this strategy would completely satisfy everyone, but as a whole the plan should be acceptable. To move forward without dissention, individuals must be willing to live with *and* support the components which they personally believe are somewhat less than perfect. To reach this stage in setting the appropriate foundation, requires

collaborative efforts with a certain amount of compromise and understanding. However, the structural components of school functioning are only one facet of the well-functioning teaching and learning workplace. The next and equally important area is that of interpersonal interactions. Although we strive for an atmosphere of harmony and collegiality, sometimes the best we can hope for is a professional working relationship which holds competence, trust and respect as its guiding principles. In a situation where the people you work with are not the ones that you would choose as social companions, there are still many things that can be done to create a positive work environment.

Respect and Trust are essential for any group to feel like they are achieving the best results possible. If these traits don't come easily to a group, they can be created by clearly identifying the expectations and accepting the limitations. Respect should be an automatic part of any professional environment but may not extend to the personal feelings about individuals. Respect means meeting reasonable expectations of following professional standards of behaviour. If those expectations are shown to be inaccurate, respect can be altered dramatically. To rebuild that respect will take significant change, considerable effort and consistent proof. Trust is a personal sense of physical and emotional safety. It exists when a reliable relationship has been developed over time. It also depends on predictability of behaviour. In a well-established, trusting relationship, an amount of inconsistency can be tolerated as long as it is believed that there is not a deliberate attempt to cause harm. When colleagues do not have the luxury of allowing trust to develop over prolonged periods of working together, they can speed up the process by communicating openly and honestly. By sharing information on beliefs and values and by observing behaviours, individuals begin to form relationships and interpretations of how to interact with each other. We learn what to expect and with whom we can work most effectively.

Staff Morale and Collegiality are strengthened by listening and understanding, by offering support, and by occasionally excusing a minor lapse in better judgement! By being encouraging and cooperative, we begin to build an atmosphere of trust and collaboration. We realize that added to the tasks of teaching, principals and teachers alike have personal lives with challenges and demands. We can easily find plenty of opportunities to show compassion or leniency without compromising integrity or quality. Showing empathy can cost very little but reap abundant returns. Rearranging duty to accommodate personal (or professional) needs; allowing the rare deviation from the routine which requires flexibility with the rules; or building in bonuses, special recognition events or regular treats are all ways to introduce a sensitivity toward, and recognition of, our common humanity. Having a sense that "we are all in this together" and are working together to help each other succeed, creates a community spirit which enables a staff to surmount obstacles. It is important to remember that no matter how we got here, we are all in the same boat and need to work together to keep it afloat and make progress. Support and compassion is a two-way process between the principal and teachers. Each of us appreciates being valued, as a human being and as a qualified professional. Despite the demands of the day, we are willing to continue with our extreme efforts and somehow the load seems a little easier to handle, if we know that we are understood and appreciated.

In a practical way, principals can promote a constructive work environment and confident staff by: encouraging and valuing teacher's opinions; acknowledging efforts and achievements; offering opportunities for shared decision-making; delegating to teachers according to their specific abilities and interests; being cautious in language and tone during communications; understanding unreasonable demands; promoting positive values; holding students accountable for profane or abusive behaviour toward teachers; and realizing that creating a team doesn't require a white hat!

It is the "Principal" that makes the difference! Teachers are willing to run a marathon for a supportive principal and some will quit the profession because of an unsupportive one. We cannot afford the consequences of mistreating others nor continue in an environment where we are being mistreated, disrespected or devalued. In those situations, everyone loses. As teachers or administrators, our behaviour is a reflection of our values and this doesn't mean the framed mission statement on our walls. Instead it is the expression of our day-to-day choices in how we treat others, perform our jobs and value our environment.

Claudette Coombs is a Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for teachers. For confidential assistance contact Claudette Coombs (ext. 242) or Marie Wall (ext. 265).

Canada's Outstanding Principals 2006

Principals Honoured for Contributions to Education

In January, exceptional leaders in education from across the country were chosen as Canada's Outstanding Principals™ for 2006. An initiative of The Learning Partnership (TLP), the group has been recognized for their unique and crucial contributions as exceptionally dedicated principals of publicly funded schools. The honour acknowledges the extraordinary contributions made by each principal to the students and local community in helping ensure quality education for Canada's young people.

David Antle, Principal of Exploits Valley High in Grand Falls-Windsor and Paul Rose, Principal of Humber Elementary School in Corner Brook, were among 30 of the country's best principals to be recognized.

Mr. Antle was honoured for implementing an information system that lets parents track student marks and attendance online. He is also responsible for setting up a faculty advisor program that provides each student with a teacher advisor. He has managed several major transitions, including student relocation, and continues to establish and support a professional learning community among an enthusiastic staff.

David Antle receives his plaque recognizing his accomplishment of being selected as one of 30 outstanding principals for 2006. (left to right): Veronica Lacey, President and CEO, The Learning Partnership, David Antle, and Ted Whiteland, President-Elect of the Canadian Association of Principals. Photo credit: Claire Kerr, The Learning Partnership.

Mr. Rose was honoured for creating a safe environment for students in a developing industrial region around the school. He has organized "Peace Days" in which students participate in activities that emphasize peaceful interaction and has promoted school-wide enrichment programs. Mr. Rose encouraged and supported the development of the school's website which shares examples of work and activities, and provides an electronic agenda for parents to check homework assignments. He also reviewed and wrote comments on every student's report.

Paul Rose receives his plaque recognizing his accomplishment of being selected as one of 30 outstanding principals for 2006. (left to right): Veronica Lacey, President and CEO, The Learning Partnership, Paul Rose, and Ted Whiteland, President-Elect of the Canadian Association of Principals. Photo credit: Claire Kerr, The Learning Partnership.

"More than ever, it is important that we continue to recognize the efforts of our educational leaders," says Veronica Lacey, TLP's President and CEO. "*Canada's Outstanding Principals* is a unique program that recognizes and celebrates the accomplishments made by school principals who provide leadership, guidance and an education to millions of Canada's students."

Nominations were received from every province and territory and selection was on a representation by population basis. Judging was conducted by a distinguished group of Canadian education, community

and private sector leaders. Each candidate was scored in the categories of: characteristics of outstanding principals; evidence of partnerships with parents and community; a personal story illustrating successful change and innovation which resulted in improved student achievement, and letters of support.

"Canada's Outstanding Principals gives us the opportunity to recognize those who give so much to their school communities and beyond," says James Hibbs, president, Canadian Association of Principals. "We are proud to partner with The Learning Partnership in honouring 30 Canadians whose commitment and dedication have contributed to making our public education system one of the best in the world."

As well as being recognized and celebrated, Mr. Antle and Mr. Rose, along with their fellow award winners, participated in a five-day Executive Leadership Training Program at the prestigious University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management from February 12-16, 2006. While in Toronto, they had the opportunity to dialogue and reflect on leadership issues with other renowned leaders from the educational, social, cultural and business communities. Following these events, the winners were inducted into the National Academy of Principals and have the opportunity to participate in a year-long online forum. In addition, on February 14, the winners were formally honoured for their contributions at a dinner in their honour, Canada's Outstanding Principals Awards Gala Celebration, which was held at the Delta Chelsea Hotel in Toronto.

Established in 1993, The Learning Partnership (TLP) is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to championing a strong public education system in Canada through innovative programs, credible research, policy initiatives and public engagement with its partners.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association would like to congratulate both winners on this very deserving award.

Grand Falls-Windsor 100th Anniversary

Students Help Celebrate Town's Rich History

by ANNE WARR

Residents of Grand Falls-Windsor won't soon forget 2005. It was a year of celebrations to mark this historic pulp and paper town's 100th anniversary. It was also an unforgettable year for some students at Woodland Primary in Grand Falls-Windsor. My Grade 2 students were chosen by the town's Centennial Committee to learn more about England, the country of the founders of our town, Alfred and Harold Harmsworth.

My class was chosen for this project because since 2002, we have been involved in a special project involving the compilation of four community profile books. Each student researched and wrote a report about a service in Grand Falls-Windsor. The class then took field trips to each site and I took photographs of each place they visited. These reports, accompanied by pictures, were compiled in a binder-type book and a website called *Woodland Connections*. You can view the *Woodland Connections* books at the Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Center and the Harmsworth Public Library.

During the 2004-05 school year, as students researched the rich history of Grand Falls-Windsor, they became friends with Major Vyvyan Harmsworth, the grand-nephew of Alfred Harmsworth (Lord Northcliffe). After walking in the Founders' Day Parade the children presented Major Harmsworth and his cousin, Viscount Jonathan Harmsworth of London, England, with letters, pictures and railway spikes taken from the old rail bed that was once a vital part of the papermaking industry in the early days of the mill. Their forefathers, Alfred and Harold Harmsworth, were responsible for building the paper mill, which has been the economic cornerstone of the region for the past 100 years. To their surprise, Major Harmsworth gave all the students a cap bearing the logo of "The Daily Mail". This newspaper, still owned by the Harmsworth family, was the driving force that prompted the brothers to go to Newfoundland in the first place to search for paper for their publishing empire in England. These super caps will serve as a constant reminder of the wonderful way the town celebrated its 100th anniversary and how Grand Falls-Windsor "rose out of the forest".

Grade 2 students presenting letters, pictures and railway spikes to Major Vyvyan Harmsworth and fourth Viscount Rothermere Jonathan Harmsworth at the Founders' Day Celebrations.

As part of the celebrations, the Centennial Committee also set up a Virtual Classroom with Vickie Peck's class at Tany's Dell Primary School in Harlow, England. Throughout the year both classes corresponded with each other, sending postcards, letters, emails and pictures. However, when the students were scheduled to link up via Internet in a video conference, there were problems establishing the link on the other side of the ocean and last year's class never got to meet their friends in the virtual classroom.

My class this year has continued to write to the students at Tany's Dell Primary School in Harlow, and Ms. Peck is still optimistic that her class will finally get to meet their friends across the ocean in the virtual classroom. For Christmas, my students sent their computer pals a Purity Gift Box that was donated by the local Co-Op Store during one of the children's field trips for *Woodland Connections IV*.

Megan Price, one of this year's grade two students, holding one of the cardboard mill lunch baskets that travelled to England in a Purity Gift Box.

After reading one of the *Flat Stanley* books, the class got the idea to put a cardboard mill lunch basket in the Purity Gift Box for each of their pen pals. In each lunch basket they put a little book that they made about the "Travelling Mill Lunch Basket". The children in England are going to carry these baskets to different places and write about the travels of the lunch baskets in the little books. My students can't wait to receive their books back to see what great adventures their baskets have experienced. The mill lunch basket became famous throughout the centennial celebrations. It is a part of the rich history of the pulp and paper mill. My father and two grandfathers carried one of these wooden baskets to work everyday. I can remember all the paper samples my father used to bring home in his lunch basket when I was a litle girl. My siblings and I used to make all our valentines, pumpkins, etc. from these samples. This year's class made their own samples from sheets of paper supplied by the mill. They drew and coloured a Christmas scene on them. When they visited Golden Years Estates, a senior citizens home in Grand Falls-Windsor, they presented one to each of the residents there. You will be able to view these presentations when *Woodland Connections IV* is ready for publication at the end of this year.

The 2004-05 Grade 2 class wearing their Daily Mail caps that Major Vyvyan Harmsworth gave them. The man in the picture is Grand Falls-Windsor Mayor Walwin Blackmore.

To discover the rich history of Grand Falls-Windsor, including the Joe Byrne Memorial Stadium, the Grand Falls House, the Gordon Pinsent Centre for the Arts, and many more, visit the Woodland Connections website at www.k12.nf.ca/woodland/woodland_connections.

Anne Warr is a teacher at Woodland Primary in Grand Falls-Windsor.

An Invitation to Success in French-language Schools

by LILIANE VINCENT

Are young Francophone children part of your personal or professional life? Do you want to increase their chances for success when they attend a French-language school? If so, please accept this invitation on behalf of all Francophone children living in minority settings across Canada. These children want to succeed and are therefore counting on all of you – families, early childhood and school professionals, decision-makers at various administrative and government levels, as well as educational institutions and community organizations.

CTF
FCE
To: All those interested in the academic success of Canada's young Francophones
From: The Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF)
We invite you to visit www.ctf-fce.ca where you will find a bouquet of new and inspiring resources.
An Invitation to Success in French-language Schools – Grade 1 Entry Profile: Language and Culture in Minority Settings
May you respond in large numbers so that Francophones of today and tomorrow can reach their full potential.

In a new, versatile and multi-component resource designed for all those involved in young children's development, the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) describes a path which can lead children to success in a French-language school. Thanks to the financial support of Social Development Canada and Canadian Heritage, a special kit designed by Madeleine Champagne along with André Champagne, and titled *An Invitation to Success in French-language Schools – Grade 1 Entry Profile: Language and Culture in Minority Settings*, was launched in February 2006.

The entire project was informed by recent research on the acquisition of language skills and cultural identity, curricula in Canada's provinces and territories and abroad, as well as numerous consultations. Indeed, a full slate of partners provided invaluable support: parents; early childhood educators; teachers; representatives from ministries and departments, school boards, colleges, universities and key associations. Of course, children in Kindergarten (4- and 5-year-olds) and in Grade 1 were also consulted.

How did the idea of a Grade 1 entry profile come to be?

Obviously, entering Grade 1 is a milestone in a child's life. But what's perhaps less known is the decisive influence of children's experiences from birth on their chances for success in a Francophone school. In other words, preparing a child for Grade 1 – language skills, cultural awareness, identity-building and sense of belonging to the Francophone community – should extend throughout early childhood. A CTF research project, *Early Childhood: Gateway to French-language Schools* (2003), shed light on the inequality of French-language early childhood care and education services across Francophone communities, in terms of access, resources, programming and staff training. The idea of a Grade 1 entry profile therefore stemmed from the desire to equalize young Francophones' chance at reaching their full potential in French-language schools.

What is the entry profile?
The profile paints a picture of children for whom efforts have been made from a very early age to develop their linguistic and cultural skills so that they can enter Grade 1 in a French-language school with complete confidence. And because the children themselves invite the reader to help ensure their success by guiding them in enjoyable and stimulating experiences, they relate these experiences from their point of view: girls and boys take turns describing the desired path. The profile statements, complemented by illustrations depicting the many expressions of learning – learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together – provide a multitude of strategies for all settings; and of course, learning by playing takes centre stage.

Why use Grade 1 as a reference point?
All of Canada's public education systems have this in common: they take responsibility for children's education on a full-time basis starting in Grade 1, so it is a reference point applicable to all Canadian children.

What special significance do language and culture have for children in Francophone minorities?
The entry profile and the complementary tools in the kit reflect the day-to-day realities of young Francophones. Consider a few facts and you quickly understand just how important proper linguistic and cultural preparation is:

- One out of every two children with French-language education rights speaks French as a first language.
- Only about 60% of potential pupils ultimately opt for a French-language school.
- Of the total potential enrolments, 64% of children come from families with only one Francophone parent.
- Only 41.6% of Francophone children retain French as their main language spoken.
- The transfer rate from French-language schools to English-language or French-immersion schools between Grades 1 and 2 is substantial.
- Comparisons with children in majority settings show that more Francophone students have major weaknesses in writing and considerable problems with reading.

There's no lack of research showing that mastery of the language of instruction plays a pivotal role in a student's performance in any subject. At six months, infants' brains already have a permanent imprint of the language to which they're exposed. Isn't it logical to conclude, then, that a six-year-old child having acquired the vocabulary and skills to continue

(continued on page 24)

learning and interacting in French will enter school more confidently and, thus, be better equipped to take full advantage of a French-language education? What's more, as these children continue to discover and interact in French, they build their cultural identity and forge ties with the surrounding Francophone community.

The greater the predominance of the Anglophone majority's language and culture, the greater the need to provide children with both space and time to actually live in French right from birth. All these experiences will equip them for academic success.

What were the project's guiding principles?

The four principles underlying language acquisition, as defined in a common framework for learning outcomes in French as a first language produced by the Western provinces, set the course for the literature review, consultations and resource development. These four principles are:

- Language is a tool for communication.
- Language is a tool for thinking and learning.
- Language is a tool for personal and social growth.
- Language acquisition and personal development go hand in hand.

For each of these, the kit's various resources present an array of strategies and activities, with the entry profile serving as the central component.

The choice is yours!

1. *Langue et culture : clés premières de la réussite à l'école de langue française en milieu minoritaire – Synthèse analytique* (in French). Summarizes the latest research on the experiences that best prepare children for Grade 1 with regard to language and culture.
2. *An Invitation to Success in French-language Schools – Grade 1 Entry Profile: Language and Culture in Minority Settings* (bilingual). Describes in detail quality learning experiences for children 0 to 6 years of age.
3. *An Invitation to Success in French-language Schools – Grade 1 Entry Profile: Language and Culture in Minority Settings – Short Version* (bilingual). Includes, in straightforward language, examples of key experiences that help prepare children for Grade 1.
4. A full-colour poster, *Me voilà en 1re année* (in French). Designed to inspire a whole range of challenging activities for children before, during and after Grade 1.
5. A learning activity booklet, *Viens jouer avec moi!* (in French). Includes examples of recommended learning activities for each of the key items in the entry profile.

A bilingual information brochure is also available.

Just like playing hopscotch

The game of hopscotch has become the kit's leitmotif. Hopscotch can take many forms and be played on all sorts of surfaces, with different objects and in a range of contexts. Similarly, children's development along the road to Grade 1 in a French-language school can take various directions and change pace regularly, all according to their interests, abilities and personal environment. What's more, the activities involved in playing hopscotch reflect the learning experiences that should ideally dot the child's road to success: speaking, acting, listening, interacting, counting, reading numbers, letters or symbols, solving problems or conflicts, showing creativity and, quite simply, playing – alone or with others – because enjoyment should always be part of the game!

A multi-player, multi-purpose resource

The parts of the kit mesh to draw a picture of the prior learning in terms of language and culture that children on the road to a French-language education would benefit from having at the start of Grade 1. We hope it will serve as the cornerstone for initiatives, programs and services that will help to position the stages of early childhood development along a learning continuum tied in with the school. Thanks to a contribution from the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL), CTF will be reaching out to interested groups by developing and providing information and training sessions over the coming year. The ultimate objective is to have multiplying agents able to promote effective use of the resource across the country.

May you respond in large numbers to our invitation to promote the success of all children who cross the threshold of a French-language school.

All documents are downloadable from the CTF website at www.ctf-fce.ca.

Liliane Vincent is Director of Services to Francophones with the Canadian Teachers' Federation.

Check out the online April issue of *The Bulletin* to view this article in French.

Never as Easy as it Looks

by BEVERLEY PARK

What Newfoundlander and Labradorian wasn't bursting with pride to watch Brad Gushue and his team at the Olympic Games? And I am not just talking of their gold medal-winning final performance; I mean every game leading up to it – including the losses. Having facilitated dozens of workshops on team building I am always conscious of the dynamics of teams. This particular group was a study in excellence on (and off) the ice. They had talent and skill. They had commitment and a dream to hang it on. They had youth and they recruited for experience. They had a competent leader.

Much has been made of Brad, the heart of the team, Russ the proven champion, Jamie the enthusiastic lead, and Mike the fresh-faced sharp shooter. Each of them different, yet complementary – their individual differences and distinctions necessary to complete the team. Not to be forgotten, there was another who distinguished himself as well. Mike Adams had to give up his place on the ice when Russ Howard was brought in. While no doubt this must have been a disappointment, his teammates spoke of his response to the decision. He accepted it, knowing it was right for the team despite the fact that it was not, obviously, what he personally wanted. There is an aspect of sacrifice in this – whether he had the choice or not. His selfless attitude played a role in the team's success. Brad Gushue did not have to concern himself, to waste valuable mental energy, worrying about whether he had done the right thing, whether a friend and fellow team member was hurt. Mike's attitude was that he embraced his new role and immediately became the best alternate Gushue could ever want. And if he ever needed reassurance of that, Mike also became the best cheerleader, never once looking down in the mouth or hesitating to support even the man who replaced him.

We watched as the team made a decision to take a risk on a more difficult shot, instead of going for a sure thing. We saw them miss that one and lose the game. This short-term failure was also an important step on the road to eventual victory. While one commentator was suggesting that had they played it safe they might have scored a point, another was saying that "their" game was a complex one, and they weren't used to playing the simple shots. Fact is, you have to play "your" game… not the one the people on the sidelines or in the commentator's box might think to be best. Even if it doesn't always give you a short-term win, it usually works out better in the long run. The Gushue team had spent months working hard and practicing to improve their play to a level where it would have been almost disappointing to see them revert to just doing the "safe" thing. They always and in all ways demonstrated that they had set high standards for themselves, and they pursued those standards by always playing their game.

There was much talk of the "team meeting" when the players had to put their heads together and clarify how they were to work together. It happened when one team member seemed to lose focus on the fact that although he had a role as an individual, he was a part of a team. We shouldn't underestimate this factor in the winning performance either. It takes an able leader to recognize a breakdown in team dynamics, and to recognize it early. It takes a brave leader to deal with it head on… with the world watching! Gushue took his guys into the huddle a little confused but they came out understanding not only what had to be done, but also how they had to do it together. They were a better team than before.

Oh, and by the way, if you think it's simply a matter of getting a group of skilled individuals together to do a job, and calling them a team, another Olympic example, the Canadian men's hockey team dispels that myth. While it may look easy, building an effective team is anything but simple. According to Patrick Lencioni, author of the New York Times best-selling book, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, "teamwork remains the one sustainable competitive advantage that has been largely untapped."

At times like this the teacher in me surfaces and I am tempted to get very explicit about all the lessons that this gold-winning team could teach us about how we live our lives and about how we do our work… but I'll resist, and invite you to think about it!

Beverley Park is an Administrative Officer in the Professional Development Division of the NLTA.

A PhD: Is it Possible?

by Dr. Lynda Younghusband

From time to time over the years, I contemplated doctoral studies and twice reached the point of gathering university calendars and programmes. Although this was something I thought I would really like to do, I lacked the confidence to take the plunge. When I attended conferences and listened to the presenters I questioned whether I could really be an academic. They all seemed so knowledgeable and I doubted whether I could be in that league.

In 2000, while I was on leave from my school guidance position to teach at Memorial, I decided to try my hand at research. The results of that study on teacher stress gave me the incentive to do further research. However, when I thought about a PhD I wondered if it was really possible for a grey-haired granny to actively pursue a doctoral programme. The answer is "yes" and I'm here to encourage you to do the same if that has been your dream.

The first thing to do is to research carefully the programmes that are available and which offer study in an area in which you might like to work. Google doctoral programmes and you will find some very good information, including programmes that can be done by distance. One book you might find useful is *Your Future: A Guide for Potential Graduate Students* by Dr. Martha Crago, McGill University. This book is available on-line at www.cags.ca. Check out the faculty to see what their research interests are and e-mail them to get an idea of what they are planning and to discuss your own interests of study. Talk to other graduate students or professors and get their input. Talk to the heads of admission programmes and talk to the person who will be your direct supervisor before you make a final decision. A good fit between student and supervisor is an absolute essential.

Questions that any prospective graduate student should ask:

1. Is funding available? Get this in writing.
2. Will there be regular meetings with the supervising professor? With other graduate students?
3. Has this supervisor had previous graduate students? Is he/she a published academic?
4. What is the average time for completion in that faculty? With that supervisor?
5. Is assistance available for grant writing? Getting articles published? Presenting papers at conferences?
6. Will your supervisor cover the costs of your thesis research?
7. Will you have office space? Lab space?

What is needed to apply to a programme:

1. Excellent references.
2. A well written, up-to-date CV.
3. Money. Applications cost $50-$150.

What do you need personally:

Every doctoral student needs a sense of confidence, resiliency, perseverance, a thick skin, a sense of humour, stamina, good health, and a good support system: friends, partner/spouse, family. Fifty percent of doctoral students drop out for a variety of reasons, but having gone through this process myself, what I valued most was the support of my friends and family. My husband learned to cook and to iron his own shirts. He had the patience of a saint, a good sense of humour and a ready supply of Kleenex on hand.

I settled on a distance programme in Florida which offered doctoral studies in counselling by distance with 8 two-week study periods on campus. The staff and faculty were all pleasant and helpful and I was assigned an advisor as soon as I was accepted. Almost immediately after receiving notice that I had been accepted at the University of Sarasota, I was offered a place in Community Medicine at Memorial. I was thrilled to be able to stay at home and to study on a part-time basis so I accepted that offer even though it wasn't in counselling. My earlier background was in nursing and my interest was in teacher stress and the implications on teachers' health so this seemed a good fit. And so, at the tender age of 58 years I began the long dreamed of road to a PhD.

Four years later, working full time for the first two years and part-time for the next two, despite a move to clinical epidemiology (Faculty of Medicine) and the loss of two supervisors, I defended my thesis and graduated a month later. The first two supervisors

took positions at universities in other provinces necessitating my move to another department and a quest for a third supervisor. The second supervisor had seen me through my courses and guided my research. She kindly continued on my committee and provided ongoing support from a distance. My final supervisor was very knowledgeable about the type of analysis that I had chosen, she was a well-respected researcher, and she insisted on quality work. I really hit the jackpot when she agreed to take me on and I count myself lucky.

Would I do it again? Well, I had some difficult days when I thought life must be worth more than being a doctoral student. I had days when I doubted my ability to be an academic and to see this process through. I thoroughly enjoyed interviewing the teacher participants in my study and analyzing the data was interesting and thought provoking. I was angry and saddened at what some participants had endured. I had vowed I did not want to write a thesis which would just collect dust on a shelf. For me, research has to have a practical purpose and should invoke some change. I feel rewarded for teachers that their working conditions have been brought to the attention of the public, in part because of my research, and I am hopeful that change will happen in the education system. It has to.

I encourage you to think about studies leading to a PhD. It is hard work and long hours. However, it is also exciting and the rewards are many. The feeling of accomplishment and pride in a job well done cannot be over stated. The day I defended my thesis was one of the most exciting, rewarding days of my life. Go for it! If I can do it, you can too.

Dr. Lynda Younghusband is a retired school counsellor, a former teacher and before that, a nurse. Teachers' health has long been a concern of hers and stimulated her interest in stress which in turn led to her doctoral research. Lynda is presently employed in the Student Counselling Centre at Memorial and she continues her research on teacher stress. She can be reached at ybnb@nfld.net.

Keeping It Positive

by PAUL STEWART

It's hard to believe that it's my seventh year! Time flies when you're having fun! Well not exactly, but I would have to say that the first fifth of my career has had far more good days than bad ones. At a time when many are frustrated about the truisms of our work, I have managed to keep site of the proverbial light. Yes, I do have some really big classes and my students are not all the academic angels I'd like them to be but, all in all, things are not that bad. So, if you're just starting out and you've had a bad day, here's a thing or two that's helped me along the way.

"At a time when many are frustrated about the truisms of our work, I have managed to keep sight of the proverbial light."

Lesson 1: In the words of my cooperating teacher: "Don't sweat the small stuff, and it's all small stuff." That's right, we often get completely overwhelmed by little things like students showing up late or missing a quiz. Relax, the planets will still be aligned and Friday will still arrive if little Johnny doesn't bring a note to school. That's not to say that we shouldn't set parameters for our children and take the time and energy to enforce them. In the first year or two of my career, I would get myself all worked up if a student played the system to dodge an assignment or skip a test. I quickly learned that the solution to problems such as these is to set the rules and explain the consequences on day one and be sure to stick to your guns in a respectful, yet firm, manner after that. By this, most kids get the message and learn to be as responsible as a teen can be.

Lesson 2: Be involved with your students in a non-academic way. There's nothing like getting in the gym and letting the young fellas "take you to school" on the basketball court. The rewards for the bruising and exhaustion are really worth it back in the classroom. Take interest in the sports teams, drama, and choir. The children really notice you cheering them on and, inadvertently, realize that you're "alright." If you have the time, I really, really suggest taking on a leadership role in some avenue of the extracurricular. I have been fortunate enough to coach girls' basketball the past couple years and, to be honest, my team has taught me more about team work, sportsmanship, and life's other essential lessons than I've taught them. Extracurricular is an essential part of our schools, and the benefits of being involved in this area greatly compensate the time it involves. Find a skill and share it with your students … you won't regret it!

Lesson 3: Be prepared. It didn't take me long to realize that going into a class unprepared is usually disastrous. Today's teens have been raised on a diet of video games and Hillary Duff. Super Mario is stealing cars and E.T. is text messaging "home" during class. Don't expect asking a group of 25 grade nines to brainstorm about hydroelectricity to win you any teaching awards. They'll chew you up! Teaching mainly biology, I find it quite helpful to review my material before each class. It keeps me sharp and renews my interest and passion for my subject area. A display of these qualities is necessary to keep up with the competition described above. In addition, make your students responsible to investigate those questions you can't answer. In my area there's lots, and the day where a teacher must know all is a thing of the past. Have fun with the kids when they stump you and use it as a way to help them learn how to learn.

So … can you expect your teaching career to be perfect? Heck no! A couple of former principals that I know have said that if you go too long without a bad day, you're not doing your job. They're right and expect to have some, but if you treat kids with respect, show a genuine interest in them and stay on top of things, your bad days will be far outweighed by good ones.

Paul Stewart is the Biology teacher at Clarenville High School.

The Teachers Institute on Canadian Parliamentary Democracy

An Intensive Professional Development Opportunity

by DAVID BARRETT

The week of October 30, 2005, offered 70 teachers the Professional Development opportunity of a lifetime. Teachers from all across the country were brought together for the Teachers Institute on Canadian Parliamentary Democracy. This unique professional development provided an interactive, informative, unforgettable week on Parliament Hill!

Included among the gathering of professionals were two Newfoundlanders. Neither my colleague nor I were in any way prepared for the educational experience we were about to partake of. The Institute, sponsored by the Library of Parliament and supported by the Speakers of both the Senate and the House of Commons, provided an unbelievably well planned and organized program with attention given to every detail. The setting was simply amazing and the leaders of our country went out of their way to make us feel welcome and to treat us as professionals. Meanwhile, the work we accomplished as a group was second to none and the memories created will last a lifetime.

It seems like just a few hours, not months ago when we had the honor to meet the Speakers of the Senate and the House of Commons as well as other parliamentarians. The support, information, and generosity provided by the Honourable Dan Hays and Mr. Peter Milliken had an immeasurable impact on all. Our key role of instilling the importance of citizenship and governance in our children was the focus of virtually every aspect of the conference.

By now you may be asking yourself, "What exactly are the highlights of this program?" Some of my most vivid memories include observing Question Period, Parliamentary Debates, and Committee Meetings. Sessions concerning political, procedural, and pedagogical issues all come to mind. Then, there was what I like to refer to as "Christmas for Teachers", the huge resource fair which supplied all participants with boxes of important resource materials that support teaching about Parliament, governance, democracy, and citizenship.

In addition to all of this were tours of West Block, Center Block, and the Supreme Court of Canada. Meeting Her Excellency, the Right Honourable Michaelle Jean, Governor General of Canada and His Excellency Jean-Daniel Lafond and observing Royal Assent. Visiting the Canadian National War Museum and taking part in a Remembrance Day Service to honor the 'Year of the Veteran' was also quite a privilege. Then there were the private meetings with MPs and Senators, civil servants, lobbyists, constitutional experts, and clerks of the House and Senate, as well as the personal honor of being able to meet with and thank the Honourable John. D. Richard, Chief Justice of the Federal Court of Appeal for his contribution to the program. Whether we shared committee rooms or dining tables with such admirable people, we were made to feel valued. No doubt about it, we felt like royalty. The memories of meals in the Parliamentary restaurant and dinner at the Château Laurier are inexpressible. Not to mention the social events which brought together such diverse individuals with such common interest.

Indeed, the week made all participating teachers feel proud of their chosen profession and allowed 70 teachers to develop networks that will be forever valuable in the classroom. We collected and shared ideas and useful tools for teaching about Parliament, governance, democracy, and citizenship that will be beneficial to students across the country. The week on "the Hill" allowed us to experience an insider's view of the intricacies of government, the legislative process, the key players, their functions and activities.

The Institute provided all with a different, real life perspective on Canadian politics; one that will surely affect the quality of instruction our students receive. My experience at this Institute will certainly benefit both me and my students. Interconnected with all the information and experiences are the feelings, impressions, and inspirations gained which will serve to encourage greater participation in the democratic process among my students.

For me, this has been the most valuable professional and personal experience I have ever had as a teacher. I returned from that week with a renewed passion for my chosen subject area and my chosen profession. My only regret is that all Social Studies teachers may not have this incredible opportunity.

Finally, I end by encouraging all my colleagues involved in teaching about our remarkable country to avail of the experience that the Teachers Institute on Canadian Parliamentary Democracy has to offer. It will be far beyond any of your expectations!

David Barrett is a Social Studies teacher at Baccalieu Collegiate in Old Perlican.

Now You Tell *Me*!

by PAT HOGAN

Hindsight is great! Sometimes friends ask me... now that you are a Certified Financial Planner, what would you have done differently with your own financial affairs when you were a practicing teacher... say ten years before you retired? An excellent question, because it allows me to share with you a few tidbits of advice... as one that has been there!

• Get a professional Financial Security Advisor to devise a comprehensive Personal Financial Plan for you and your spouse to include all of items to follow. By this I mean a Certified Financial Planner (CFP) who has the knowledge and skills to help you along a six-step process: 1) establishing the relationship with your planner; 2) gathering your data and establishing goals and expectations; 3) clarifying your current financial status and identifying problem areas and opportunities; 4) developing and presenting your financial plan; 5) implementing the financial plan; and 6) monitoring the financial plan. Only in this way can you consider all aspects of your finances in an integrated way – budgeting and money management, debt reduction, tax reduction strategies, risk management using various kinds of insurance, investments for the future (e.g. RRSP, RESP, non-registered savings accounts), and estate planning.

The alternative to this "comprehensive" approach is a "segmented" approach attending to one aspect only. ***Example:*** Jonathan goes to the bank (which holds his mortgage) to buy an RRSP. This product can be readily supplied, but many other aspects of his financial affairs (noted above) are not considered. This is not "true" financial planning.

Purchasing a product is a one-time event; providing an ongoing service is something else again. Focusing on just one or two financial parameters is fine, but taking an integrated and comprehensive approach so that each piece is recognized as part of a whole and compliments every other piece – given your goals and priorities – that's true financial planning!

• Disability Insurance, sometimes called "salary continuation" insurance, to extend your sick leave by providing a tax-free benefit (income protection) to safeguard your most important financial asset – your dependable income stream that supports all your other financial commitments – funding your goals, paying all your bills, and providing a cushion for emergencies.

• Life Insurance – ample amounts of low-cost group insurance to pay down all your debts, retire your mortgage, pay off loans and credit cards, etc. A life insurance "Needs Assessment" will show you what is recommended – again an essential element, especially for single parents or couples with children – in your financial security.

Note: NLTA members are fortunate in having good group insurance plans – some aspects cost-shared with Government – to cover life, disability/salary continuation, health, dental, with optional coverage for home and auto as well.

• Travel Medical Insurance – especially when traveling outside Canada. The costs of not having it far outweigh the price of buying it, not to mention peace of mind.

• Debt Reduction – ideally, getting the balance on your one [yes, one!] credit card to $0 each month. Why do you need all those credit cards, or even worse, those high-interest store cards?

• Having a mortgage-payment plan – so as to burn your mortgage at your retirement party, if not before. Using strategies like-eliminating "mortgage insurance" and "disability insurance" on your mortgage (if you already have sufficient life insurance and disability coverage through the NLTA group plans), accelerating your payments to coincide with your 26 pay periods annually, using your RRSP refund to diminish your mortgage principal, and availing of your mortgage's early pre-payment provisions to pay down the principal, etc.

• Investments – maximizing your RRSP contributions to augment your retirement income later and save taxes today. ***Example:*** For most teachers – around the 40% MTR (marginal tax rate) – for each $1,000 contributed to an RRSP, you will reduce your taxes by 40% or $400. So, you will be out-of-pocket $600!

• Using a Spousal RRSP – this is really important where one spouse has a lower income or little or no pension plan. It is a highly-recommended "income-splitting" strategy worth considering as it will save a couple big tax dollars later after retirement.

• Life Insurance revisited – since our NLTA group life insurance, practically speaking, phases out at age 65, and it would be much desired if the life of the higher-income/higher-pensioned spouse especially was covered until age 75 or even 80, consider taking out an individual life insurance policy to extend your coverage well beyond age 65. Note that our group life plans (A1 & A2) do guarantee the privilege of conversion on your 65th birthday to an individual plan, regardless of your health status.

True Confession: On a personal note, I should have taken advantage of my lower age and good health, at the time, to purchase an individual life insurance policy when I was around age 50. This could have replaced my A2 voluntary coverage (which served me well in my early and mid-career years) and given me life insurance coverage well beyond age 65.

As it happened, I did apply for this later, after I retired, and fortunately was healthy at that time to be accepted. Now I'm covered to age 75, but the fixed premiums are much higher now than they would have been at age 50! If I had delayed and waited to use the "conversion option" at age 65, the premiums would be much higher still. Now you tell me!

Note: See my article *Three Stages of Life Insurance* which explains this really important point in more detail. The link can be found on the NLTA website under *The Bulletin*, June/05 issue, page.6

• Start a "Futures Fund" – a non-registered investment (a.k.a. "savings") account to regularly put aside money for those inevitable "medium-to-longer-term" expenses… a family vacation, a wedding, a down payment on a new car, saving for a dream, etc.

• Start an RESP (Registered Education Savings Plan) for your children to assist them with post-secondary education expenses. The CESG (Canadian Education Savings Grants) from Government will augment your efforts with an additional 20% (or more in some cases) contribution. Don't forget you can also make up for lost time for previous years when no contributions were made.

• Your monthly budget – the regular expenses are easy to identify and track; the irregular ones are the problem. They can appear, often at random, and in unpredictable amounts!

True Confession: Again, on a personal note, it was only after years of trial and error that I got a handle on this one. The trick is to identify all those occasional expenses, e.g. annual vacation, auto repairs and licenses, Christmas expenses, home upgrades, clothes, entertainment, medical/dental/vet expenses not covered by insurance, gifts, sports and club memberships, tuition fees, subscriptions, and a "reserve", etc. Once I totaled all these items on an annual basis, I divided by 12 and budgeted for them with a monthly dedicated amount in my budget. That way I always had cash flow available when these bills came out of the blue! Now you tell me!

• Financial Decision-making – the timing of retirement, severance payment options, using your home equity to secure a line of credit at prime (or close to prime) rates, mortgage renewal decisions, investing wisely within your "risk tolerance", deciding who pays the monthly bills (the higher-income spouse) and who does the family investing (the lower-income spouse), banking decisions, money management decisions, reconciling conflicting philosophies on spending/saving, etc. This is where a Financial Planner on your side can be invaluable!

• Using tax-saving strategies – maximizing deductions and credits, sharing credits within the family, minimizing taxes – especially on non-registered investment accounts, tax-deferral strategies, etc.

• Estate Planning – while this may not be a "front-burner" item now, having a will in place is a "must" for everyone. Again, the small price you pay bears no comparison to the cost of not having a will and dying intestate. It just makes good sense to be prudent in this important aspect of your affairs as it does with your insurance or investments.

Pat Hogan is a retired principal/teacher and a Certified Financial Planner (CFP) with Great-West Life and Quadrus Investment Services. He would welcome comments or inquiries, with no obligation, at 709-754-0413 or email: hogan@nl.rogers.com.

NLTA
Branch Elections
May – June 2006

- Would you like to be more involved in decisions affecting your professional and personal future?
- Do you feel you have skills or abilities which you can offer to your professional Association?
- Would you like to be more informed about, and involved in, the internal operations of your Association?

Then consider becoming a member of your branch leadership team by offering yourself for a position on the branch executive when branch elections are held this spring. **Contact a member of your branch executive or your NLTA School Representative for more details.**

GETTING IT RIGHT FOR ADOLESCENT LEARNERS
CEA SYMPOSIUM
May 15-17, 2006
Vancouver. What happens when 27 high school students, representing school boards from Halifax, Toronto, and Vancouver, collaborate in producing a dramatic presentation of their high school experiences? What happens when committed educators are then asked to reflect upon this creative presentation and its relation to research and practice? What happens when these same participants are also invited to collectively imagine a better future for adolescent learners? Join us in Vancouver on May 15-17 for this novel initiative also featuring round table discussions, interactive studio labs, and keynote speakers, clinical psychologist Gordon Neufeld and Galileo Educational Network co-founders Pat Clifford and Sharon Friesen. For information contact: www.cea-ace.ca/media/en/Program_Symposium_May06.pdf

GEOTEC
June 18-21, 2006
Ottawa. GeoTec, the largest geospatial technology event in Canada, is celebrating the Atlas of Canada's 100th Anniversary. Theme: *Celebrating History and Innovation*. The event will feature sessions that commemorate the innovative contributions of the Atlas of Canada, and the contributions by Canadians in the advancement of geospatial technology. For information visit www.geoplace.com/uploads/GeoTecEvent/htm/intro.asp.

INTERNATIONAL PEACE EDUCATION CONFERENCE
June 25-27, 2006
Vancouver. The British Columbia Teachers' Federation, in cooperation with the CTF and Education International is coordinating an International Peace Education Conference (IPEC) as a strand of the World Peace Forum (June 23-28). Theme: *Educating a Generation to Create a Culture of Peace*. Over 100 workshops and keynote presentations will be available to participants. For more information visit www.worldpeaceforum.ca or contact Jane Turner at jturner@bctf.ca or 604-871-1871.

CRYSTAL FORUM: NETWORKING PROFESSIONALS
July 31 - August 4, 2006
UNB, Fredericton. Theme: *Fuelling the Future*. Expand/update your science-technology and mathematics background. Network with other educators, scientists, mathematicians, and engineers. Form Teacher Action Groups and apply for funds to put your ideas into practice. For more information visit www.CRYSTALAtlantique.ca.

COSS WORKSHOPS
Fall 2006
September 14 – Mount Peyton Hotel, Grand Falls-Windsor; September 15, Airport Inn, St. John's. **Teaching in the Mixed Ability Classroom: Brain Biology and the Layered Curriculum**. Featuring Dr. Kathie Nunley. This workshop begins with an entertaining and humorous look into current brain research. The second half focuses on solutions for meeting the needs of diverse learners in today's inclusive classroom. For information contact Keith Adey, Tel: 709-292-5727.

October 16-17 – Grand Falls-Windsor. **Anger Management/De-escalation (Train-the-Trainer)**. Participants will learn practical verbal and physical intervention techniques of de-escalating potentially violent situations. October 18-19 – Grand Falls-Windsor. **Bullying Stops When Respect Begins (Train-the-Trainer)**. Participants will learn strategies to help address the issue of bullying in schools. For more information, visit www.keystosaferschools.com or see the February 2006 COSS newsletter.

SAC Conference

May 31 - June 2, 2006 • Gander Hotel

LEADERSHIP – A RISKY BUSINESS

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Ted Whiteland

PRESENTERS:
Stephanie Boyle, Senior Policy Analyst, RCMP
Dr. Linda Younghusband, MUN

PRE-CONFERENCE:
Linda Millar, Concerned Childrens' Advertisers
"Media Literacy, Bullying and Healthy Schools"
Weds., May 31 (Open to classroom teachers)

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
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Dates to Remember

May 2006
May 7 **Deadline:** Notification by Board of layoff
May 14-20 Branch Election Week
May 18 **Deadline:** Professional Development Fund applications

June 2006
June 2-3 NLTA Executive Meeting
June 15 **Deadline:** Notification by board of acceptance/rejection of Deferred Salary Leave requests

July 2006
July 31 **Deadline:** NLTA Scholarship Applications